



**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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August 29, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
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**FINAL QUARTERLY UPDATE - RESPONSE TO ENSURING FOOD SECURITY FOR
YOUTH WHO AGE OUT OF FOSTER CARE BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 3, AGENDA OF
DECEMBER 13, 2011)**

On December 13, 2011, by motion of Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, with an amendment by Supervisor Antonovich, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the then Interim Directors of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to develop and implement a plan to ensure complete CalFresh applications are timely and successfully submitted on behalf of foster youth, ages 18-21, when dependency is terminated. Also, the CEO, DPSS, and DCFS are to report back quarterly on the County's improved rates of successfully enrolling aging-out foster youth into CalFresh.

The amendment by Supervisor Antonovich directed the Chief Executive Officer, the then Interim Directors of DCFS and Probation Department, in consultation with Faith-Based community partners, County-contracted providers, youth and foundations, to: (1) develop a comprehensive resource guide for all food banks, food closets and public programs for provision to all exiting youth; (2) solicit donations of food store gift cards from the community and community foundations for distribution to youth in need; (3) enhance the availability of nutritional food information and programs on budgeting, shopping, cost comparison and meal planning to aging-out youth; and (4) develop an outcomes evaluation mechanism by which to measure the long-term impacts of each type of food security assistance resource upon the futures of Los Angeles County aging-out youth.

Quarterly Update for April 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014

For the period of April 1, 2014 through June 20, 2014, 230 foster youth terminated jurisdiction; however, only 27 were eligible to have CalFresh applications filed on their behalf by DCFS.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

The remaining 203 youth terminated jurisdiction; but at the time of jurisdiction termination, CalFresh applications either could not be filed on their behalf (runaways), or were not needed due to factors such as, incarceration, returned home to parent, moved out of Los Angeles County jurisdiction, or were receiving DPSS benefits before they terminated jurisdiction.

DPSS received 26 applications from the first group across all available support programs, as shown in Table One below. CalFresh applications were 70% of the total applications received by DPSS by this group. As of January 1, 2014, exiting foster youth are no longer required to re-apply for Medi-Cal. Therefore, this data was not included in the Tables.

Table One – Benefits Applied for By Youth

Quarter	CalFresh	%	General Relief	%	CalWorks	%	Total
Apr 2014 – Jun 2014	26	70%	10	27%	1	3%	37

The CalFresh application submittal rate of 70% is a marked increase from the previous 31% benefit application rate last reported to the Board for the period of January 2014 through March 2014. Moreover, a closer analysis completed for this quarter by the DCFS/DPSS CalFresh Project Committee, shows that 26 out of the 27 eligible youth had a CalFresh submitted to DPSS on their behalf either through the youth's DCFS social worker, or through the out-stationed DPSS Outreach Workers housed in every DCFS line regional office. This is a 96% compliance rate.

Table Two reflects the disposition of all DPSS benefit applications processed for all foster youth who exited out of DCFS jurisdiction:

Table Two – April 2014 through June 2014 Benefit Filings

Programs	Approved	%	Denied	%	Pending	%	Terminated	%	Total
CalWorks	6	67%	1	11%	1	11%	1	11%	9
CalFresh	40	54%	24	32%	8	11%	2	3%	74
GR	9	24%	22	58%	7	18%	0	0%	38
Total	55	45%	47	39%	16	13%	3	3%	121

The Department, in partnership with DPSS continued to employ the following strategies, which were successful in achieving the high rate of success during this quarter. DPSS Outreach Workers remain out-stationed in every DCFS regional office to assist youth in need of CalFresh benefits and recently expanded its scope to assist in enrolling DCFS families in need of Medi-Cal and CalFresh benefits as well. The DPSS Outreach Worker remains as the centralized individual in every DCFS regional office where completed CalFresh applications by DCFS workers with their youth can be submitted for expedited processing by the Outreach Worker.

The internal DCFS CalFresh tracking system remains a key data tracking mechanism for DCFS offices to identify the termination of youth and monitoring the compliance of DCFS staff, to provide eligible youth assistance in applying for CalFresh benefits. The data was very valuable in the monthly DCFS/DPSS CalFresh Project Committee meetings in reconciling

CalFresh application compliance with both Departments, with DPSS utilizing information from LEADER to verify CalFresh applications receipt from DCFS and to determine application status: approved, denied, terminated and pending.

Two additional strategies were planned for this quarter. DCFS fully implemented an incentive bonus of \$50 using Independent Living Program Chafee funds for any exiting foster youth who met with a DPSS Outreach Worker and completed a CalFresh application. This strategy had minimal impact with very few youth requesting the incentive bonus. The second strategy, having the Benefits Enrollment Unit located at Edelman Children's Court, offer enrollment to foster youth attending their court jurisdiction termination hearing, could not be executed as planned during the quarter due to logistical issues involving non-DCFS staff having access to youth while they are in Shelter Care at Court. Instead, DCFS assigned a full-time Community Worker in Shelter Care in May 2014. The Community Worker's main responsibility is to meet individually with all youth in Shelter Care on a daily basis and provide every youth with independent living services and resources available to them, including DPSS benefit supports.

Supervisor Antonovich's Board Motion Amendment

The following are Supervisor Antonovich's Board motion amendment final updates, as the implementation plans of the Los Angeles County Information Line (211)'s created "Youth Services Portal" website were completed during the quarter.

The website has been operational since the beginning of this quarter (April 2014). During the quarter, DCFS and 211 developed specific promotional materials to advertise the "Youth Services Portal" website, consisting of 10,000 flyers and 25,000 information cards for youth to carry in their wallets or purses.

By the end of June 2014, the following website public relations strategies were achieved. The website flyers were distributed to all County human services Departments, including DPSS, Mental Health, Public Health and Community and Senior Services. All DCFS and Probation staff were made aware of the website for workers' own use when needing to locate services and supports for transition age youth, including all community food security resources. DCFS contract providers and community partners who service youth and our caregiver populations (foster homes, groups, Kinship and Adoptions), were provided information about the portal website. Finally, every DCFS foster youth 16 years of age and above (5,000 in total) was mailed the 211 "Youth Services Portal" flyer. The information cards are available to youth in every DCFS regional office and all community partners serving youth.

Based on the above accomplishments, this will be the final Food Security Motion quarterly report provided to the Board Offices by DCFS. The efforts between DCFS and DPSS and the refinement work necessary to implement effective strategies, demonstrate a strong collaborative effort between both Departments to ensure and enhance the self-sufficiency supports and services available to all exiting foster youth.

Each Supervisor
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If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM
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c: Chief Executive Officer
Director, Department of Public Social Services
Chief Probation Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Deputy Chief Executive Officer